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Jamiatul Ulama

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COUNCIL OF MUSLIM THEOLOGIANS
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Terror Attacks on Congregants in New Zealand

PRESS STATEMENT (For Immediate Release)

Tragic accounts are coming out of New Zealand where in Christchurch, Al Noor and Linwood Mosques came under attack during Friday prayer, resulting in dozens of fatalities, many more injured and left traumatised.

It is apparent in this developing story that this was an orchestrated and a well-planned attack on multiple targets, aimed at inflicting maximum harm on Muslims, young and old, families and congregants, while in worship.

We condemn strongly this level of hate and terror which we believe is fomented by Islamophobic rhetoric normalised and ratcheted in recent times by supposedly responsible leaders, in positions of power and influence.

Our hearts go out to the survivors and the communities in Christchurch, currently under city-wide lockdown, as they mourn the loss of the departed ones, killed at places of prayer, the supposed sanctuaries of peace and safety. We pray for the quick recovery of those injured in these attacks made of sheer hate.

Describing the day as 'one of the darkest ones' in that country, we welcome the words of the prime minister of Zealand, Jacinda Ardern, who has said:

Many of those who will have been directly affected by this shooting may be migrants to New Zealand, they may even be refugees here. They have chosen to make New Zealand their home, and it is their home. They are us.

The person who has perpetuated this violence against us is not. They have no place in New Zealand. There is no place in New Zealand for such acts of extreme and unprecedented violence, which it is clear this act was.

As the world will be watching New Zealand's authorities investigate these heinous crimes, in order to bring perpetrators to book, we would like to echo the calls to declare Islamophobia 'a crime against humanity'. The world should not reward racists and peddlers of hate to make careers out of the maligning of Muslims and the propagation of Islamophobia.

On these shores, as we observe the 2019 Anti-Racism Week, let us reflect on these developments in New Zealand, and say 'no' to hate, bigotry and prejudice.

Especially on social media, let us be more circumspect and curb the curiosity that promotes the circulation of materials that unwittingly gives undue publicity to the mongers of hate crimes.

Issued by:

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Operating in Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West, Free State and Northern Cape Provinces

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